THIEVING DETECTED:

BEING

A TRUE AND PARTICULAR DESCRIPTION,

OF THE VARIOUS

METHODS AND ARTIFICES,

USED BY

THIEVES AND SHARPERS,

TO

TAKE IN AND DECEIVE

THE

P U B L I C;

With proper Cautions to guard againſt ſuch deſtructive Meaſures.

Addreſſed (by Permiſſion) to

SIR JOHN FIELDING,

And very neceſſary to be read by all Magiſtrates, Merchants, Tradeſmen, Inn-Keepers, Book-Keepers, Proprietors of Waggons, Machines, &c. and thoſe in private Life.

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PREFACE.

AS I thought it neceſſary for the good of the public, to write the following Treatiſe on Thieving and Defraud, I think myſelf accountable to them in what manner I came by the materials requiſite for a work of this kind.

It is now three years ſince a gentleman who had been a cloſe and valuable friend, from ſome private motives (not neceſſary to mention here) became my moſt inveterate and implacable enemy;

the confining me for debt a conſiderable time was not ſufficient to ſtifle his revenge, but to gratify it the more fully, felony was laid to my charge, and though in a foreign country I came over voluntarily, ſurrendered myſelf to juſtify my innocence, and was moſt honourably acquitted to the great ſatisfaction of a crowded court.

During my ſtay in Newgate, which was near three months, I devoted the greateſt part of the time I had to ſpare from my own affairs, in the making myſelf acquainted with thoſe particulars which I thought might, at ſome period, prove of ſervice to the public.

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There was at this time, within the horrid confines of that priſon, ſeveral felons who were very much reſpected by the others for being clever in the different branches they followed; from theſe men I uſed to collect all I could get from them; and having a very great eſteem for me, they made no ſecret of communicating to me the different robberies they had committed, with the methods they made uſe of to accompliſh their nefarious purpoſes.----Theſe men were tried and acquitted, but three months had ſcarcely ſtole away, before I ſaw them executed; I lamented the wretchedneſs of their fate; amidſt all their vices, they poſſeſſed many virtues; and had

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not bad company, which they unfortunately fell into, have corrupted their principles, they might have been valuable members of the community, and a happineſs to their families and friends.------ Theſe conſiderations revived the thoughts I had when in confinement of acquiring a perfect knowledge of the ways and means made uſe of by thieves and ſharpers, to communicate them to the public, which would not only be the means of ſecuring their property, but would prevent thoſe unfortunate men from having an opportunity of doing thoſe actions which would bring them to a vile and diſgraceful death, or what is almoſt as bad, the loſs of their liberty.

liberty.----With this view I frequently went to thoſe places where they all frequented; I was aſtoniſhed at their numbers, but much more ſo, at the various methods they made uſe of to procure a livelihood; and I became perfectly ſenſible of this truth, that the frequent public executions we had, inſtead of deterring thoſe that remained from following the like proceedings, which brought thoſe unhappy wretches to ſo ignominious an end, made them only more hardened and deſperate.

All I have further to add, is, that as I do not recollect my having omitted mentioning any of the old and new eſtabliſhed methods of theiving and defraud, I hope

I hope my advice will be followed, it being much better to prevent crimes by guarding againſt the means made uſe of to commit them, than deterring by ſevere and ſanguinary puniſhments, for when the cauſes are removed, the effects muſt ceaſe of courſe.

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THIEVING

THIEVING DETECTED,

ADDRESSED TO

MERCHANTS, TRADESMEN, &c. &c.

THE KIDD.

THERE are four ways of working this: the two firſt were practiſed very much about twenty years ſince, with very great ſucceſs; but in the courſe of a few years it became ſo well known, that they who followed it thought it neceſſary, for their own ſafety, to leave it off for a time. Twelve years ago it was again revived, and much money were got at it, but the vigilance of Sir John Fielding put a ſtop to it, after the public had been defrauded by it, for near three years.

As it moſt likely will be uſed again in a few winters more, I think it neceſſary to mention in what manner they proceed, and how to guard againſt it.—There is generally three concerned, one of which is dreſſed like a gentleman, who, when he ſees a porter loaded, will come up to him and make enquiry if he knows where there is another to be found, for he wants a letter to be taken very near there immediately, and for his trouble he would give him two ſhillings, or half-a-crown; the man generally makes anſwer I wiſh I hadn't this load, I ſhould be glad to go myſelf: the thief replies directly, I wiſh with all my heart you hadn't, half-a-crown would be of ſervice to you; but, however, that ſhall be of no hinderance, put down your load, and I'll take care of it till you return: the porter very often complies, one of the other two follows him, and when he finds he hath no ſuſpicion of the roguery, he comes back, tells his companions, and they go off with it.

The other way is generally attended with

with more ſucceſs than the firſt, and is as follows.—One goes to an Inn and remains in the yard with his hat off, and a pen either behind his ear or in his mouth; when a porter comes, he aſks him where that is going to; if the porter ſays by ſuch a waggon, or ſuch a machine; the thief will call one belonging to him, and order him to take it into the warehouſe belonging to that particular waggon or machine: if the porter does not ſee through the deception, they only wait till he is gone out of the place, and they ſoon after follow him.——Now the only way to prevent theſe artifices from ſucceeding, is to give ſtrict orders to every porter not to go of a meſſage for any one; and to ſee whatever he takes to an Inn properly booked before he quits it.

The other ways of working the Kidd is but newly invented, but it is almoſt incredible to think what amazing ſucceſs they have had; there is ſcarcely a night but upwards of fifty pounds are got at it; and of a Saturday night I may venture

to ſay not leſs than one hundred pounds upon an average, throughout the winter there is three to manage this: the buſineſs of one is, when he ſees a boy with a load or a bundle, he goes up to him, and makes enquiry how far he is from ſuch-a-place; if the boy knows, he tells him; the thief then ſays, I am ſure I know your face, pray where do you live? in ſuch-a-place, ſays the Kidd, who with there? (continues the other) why with Mr. ſuch-a-one, (whatever the maſter's name may be) and what is he? ſays the the thief; when the boy tells him, the other replies, then I ſuppoſe you have got (mentioning ſome article that belongs to the buſineſs) if he happens to ſay right, the Kidd anſwers, yes, and if not, he generally tells him what it is: the next thing the thief makes enquiry about, is, where he is going to, which when he has learnt, he walks with him a little farther, and then quits him: he then tells one of his companions every particular, who immediately ſets off, gets ſome way before

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the boy, turns round and then pretends to meet him, Ah! ſays he to the Kidd, I am glad I have met you, or I ſhould have been obliged to have gone as far as your houſe; you muſt give me (mentioning what he has got) and go back to Mr. (that is the name of the Kidd's maſter) and tell him to ſend directly ſuch an article to Mr. (that is where the boy was going to) for he is now waiting for it: the Kidd, not ſuſpecting any deceit, as the other was ſo well acquainted with every particular, gives him what he has, and runs back as faſt as he can: ſhould he happen to recollect the impropriety of his leaving it, and go back to get it again; the third is ready behind to turn him up, as they ſtile it, ſo that it is impoſſible to recover it again after it is once delivered into the hands of theſe rogues. If the things happen to be very valuable, application is made to a magiſtrate, but as he is unacquainted in what manner they were got, the meaſures he purſues always proves ineffectual: for as the boy does not think that the

firſt perſon who made the enquiry of him was concerned, as he did not ſee him when he delivered the things unto the other, ſo he forgets to mention that particular to his maſter, or the magiſtrate, and they very frequently all conclude that it muſt be ſomebody belonging to the party the things were going to that got them.

As this information is of great conſequence to every tradeſman and others, who ſends goods out by their apprentices or errand-boys, they ſhould be particularly careful to caution them againſt ſatisfying any one in ſuch enquiries, or delivering any thing but at the houſe they are ſent to.

The other way of working the Kidd is, two goes to an inn, and makes enquiry of the book-keeper if there is ſuch a parcel left there, which was brought by ſuch a waggon or machine; as the book-keeper cannot always charge his memory with what parcels are left there, he goes in to ſee, and they follow him; and when

when they ſee a bale, a portmanteau, or a parcel that is wrote upon in the directions to Mr. or Mrs. ſuch-a-one, to be left till called for; they pencil it down upon a bit of paper, or if they have not an opportunity to do that, they keep it in their memory till they have got out of the inn; they then write it down, ſends for a ticket-porter, gives him the directions, and orders him to bring it to ſuch a place; a third, which has not been ſeen yet, follows the porter to the inn, and if he ſees it delivered without any ſuſpicion, he waits till the porter is gone, keeps at a proper diſtance to obſerve that no one from the inn follows him; and when he finds every thing is ſafe, he gives the office to his companions, who repair to the place the porter was ordered to come to; they then diſcharge him, and take it away with them.

This has been done ſeveral times with ſucceſs, and will many times more, unleſs proper precautions are uſed to prevent it. The moſt effectual way I know of is, for

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the book-keeper not to ſuffer ſuch directions to lay in ſight of any one but himſelf, and to prevent, as much as poſſible, any one from going into thoſe places where they are depoſited.

HOUSE-BREAKING, or, in the flaſh language, to Mill a Kin.

AS no ſpecies of robbing is ſo dreadful as this, ſo none ought to be guarded againſt with more caution; none but the moſt deſperate villains attempts it, and as they know the danger is great, and the puniſhment capital, they generally fix upon thoſe houſes where they can get the moſt property; and they do it ſo effectual, that ſome hundreds of families have been entirely ruined by it: there are four ways of doing it, which I think proper to mention, as that alone ought to be a ſufficient precaution how every one ſhould act to ſecure that property which is neceſſary to carry themſelves and families comfortably through life.———One way they ſtile

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the crack, and very juſtly, as they are obliged to force the door or window-ſhutter open with an iron-crow, which they could not do with the leaſt degree of ſafety or ſucceſs, if the windows were properly ſecured, with a double bar, in the form of a croſs; and the door ſecured with two bolts, a bar, and a chain; the forcing of either of theſe open would cauſe a noiſe great enough to be heard by the whole family, and almoſt the whole neighbourhood.———The ſecond way is with a dub, (a name for a falſe key) but as there are very few who have no other ſecurity than a lock after they go to reſt, it is ſeldom in the winter they can make uſe of this method, unleſs it is of a Sunday evening, when the family happens to be out, as it does now and then; ſummer is the time this is done with ſucceſs, when families are out of town, many of whom are ſo fooliſh or neglectful not to leave no ſervant nor any other in their houſes; this is ſoon known by the thieves, and in the follow-

ing manner: when they ſee a houſe cloſe ſhut up, they make enquiry in the neighbourhood if it is to lett; when they are informed that the houſe is not empty, but belongs to a family then in the country, all they have to do then, is to know if any one lies in the houſe, to arrive to a certainty of which, they go and trig the ſtreet door, that is, they put a little round ſtone in ſuch a poſition, that when the door opens it muſt roll into the entry; two or three nights after they come again, and if they find the ſtone in the ſame ſituation they left it, they then know that no one is in the houſe, of which advantage they avail themſelves by opening the door with a falſe key, and taking away every thing that is valuable.

The beſt and only way I can think of is, always to leave a man ſervant in the houſe, ſtrictly cautioned never to lie out, or be late out at night: private bolts are of little ſervice, as a crow ſoon forces them open: many have found the truth of this to their ſorrow.——The third way

way is to do a Kin by the parapet, this method is done at all times of the year, and with greater ſucceſs than any other; if an empty houſe is in a ſtreet, they get into that, and ſo out upon the tops of the houſes, till they come to that they have pitched upon; ſhould the garret window happen to prove ſecure, they go on to another houſe, get into the window of that, and take away as much as they can conveniently carry.

Notwithſtanding the frequent robberies that have been committed by this very means, and the many cautions given by the police in Bow-ſtreet, the greateſt part of the inhabitants of this town are ſtill remiſs in not having their garret-windows properly ſecured; their having a ſervant to lie in the rooms ſpoke of is but of very little ſervice, as more robberies are committed in this manner early in the evening, than at the dead of night; for that time favours them moſt.———The fourth way, they ſtile the Ruſh, a term very applicable to the

manner of doing it, which is to knock at the door, and the moment it opens, ruſh in, knock down the perſon that opens it, ſecure the reſt that are in the houſe, by binding them ſeparately, or together, and then riſle the place of every thing that is valuable.——As the very idea of ſuch a proceeding muſt make every generous heart ſhudder with horror, it behoves every one to be as careful as they can to prevent ſuch a horrid and villainous action from happening to themſelves; particularly thoſe who live in bye private ſtreets or places, or any where near town, or in the country.——The beſt method I can think of is, to have a chain that will admit of the door opening wide enough to make enquiry who it is; if it is a friend, or one as you know, you can then act as you think proper; or if it is a ſtranger, whatever his deſigns may be, you are then perfectly ſafe, as you would have time ſufficient to prepare yourſelves, or alarm the neighbourhood, before he could

could get the door open wide enough to enter by himſelf, or with his confederates.

THE DRAG LAY.

IT would be impoſſible to enumerate the many loſſes the proprietors of waggons have ſuſtained within the courſe of theſe fifteen years; twenty thouſand pounds would not diſcharge the whole, and yet no proper method has been found out to prevent their waggons from continuing being robbed.

A Mr. Cook, proprietor of the Cambridge waggons, was robbed not leſs than twelve times within the period of twelve months, of many things of great value; after the ſecond or third time, he placed a man behind, when they found that out, they robbed him before; he was then obliged to guard the front, as well as behind; when, to puniſh him for his too great circumſpection, they robbed him of the ſide, and that more effectual,

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than they did either of the other ways; when thoſe men died, you ſcarcely ever heard of a robbery of that kind for near three years after: till ſome young ones ſprung up, who have made many attempts, and have as often proved ſucceſsful; but as they did not know how to manage matters properly, the moſt they got at a time, was a ſmall bale, trunk, or portmanteau. Within theſe three years, ſeveral of the old ones who were tranſported, have come home, and not ſatisfyed with following their former practices again themſelves, they have taught ſeveral of theſe young ones in what manner to act, who have proved themſelves very forward pupils, and worthy the tutorage of their maſters; and to make them ſtill more compleat, theſe Engliſh exiles have acquainted them with ſeveral new expeiments, which are to be put in practice in a very ſhort time; but the timely warning I give, I hope will not be treated with neglect, as they will elſe bring ruin upon themſelves, and juſtly merit the cen-

cenſure of the world in general.—I ſhall proceed to mention theſe new experiments: the firſt, a quantity of laudanum is provided, which the one, who takes a place in the waggon, is to give the waggoner, and whoever may be with him, in a tankard of porter or purl; another is to be behind with a tilted cart, in order to receive the goods when the waggoner and his companion, if he has any, are a-ſleep. How effectual this may prove I leave others to judge.

The other experiment is, two men or women, are to take a place in a waggon, and to avoid any kind of ſuſpicion, one is to go from the inn, and the other is to be taken up a mile or two from town; and not to take any notice of each other before the waggoner. When a proper opportunity offers, they are to hand whatever they can get, out to the men they are concerned with, who takes it to a cart they have at a ſmall diſtance; then comes back and goes off with more. In this manner they will act till they think

they have got ſufficient. Thoſe in the waggon are then to proceed till they come to the place they were to go to, which they take care ſhall not be far from London. They then give the waggoner what they agreed for, and take their leave of him.

If the caution I am now going to give, be ſtrictly obſerved, I'll pledge myſelf that no more advertiſements will be ſeen from any Public Office, of waggons being robbed; and that is, only for a man or a boy to walk or ride behind the waggon, ſo as to command every part of the off ſide; this will prevent any thing from being done either behind, before, or of that ſide; he muſt continue following it in this manner I have mentioned, till it has got at leaſt, eight or ten miles out of town; it being very ſeldom they go ſo far; but it will not be unneceſſary if a ſtrict watch is kept upon that ſide, a much greater diſtance; it will likewiſe render abortive all the attempts of any inſide paſſangers, whether they mean to give any thing out

to their companions, or to drop things in the road with cords, for them to take up without running any danger of being ſeen. This hath been done ſeveral times with ſucceſs.

I confeſs myſelf at a loſs what precaution to ſuggeſt to prevent the laudanum from taking place, unleſs it is their never drinking with any paſſenger; but that is not to be expected, for theſe kind of men will drink, ſo it is not at their own coſt, though they run the greateſt danger of the property they are employed to take care of, being taken from them.

The KNUCKLE.

THOSE only are ſtiled Knuckles who confine themſelves to the picking pockets of watches, ſnuff-boxes, pocket-books, and money, and moſt of them are ſo ſucceſsful as to be enabled to live in the ſtile of gentlemen; there is ſcarce a place of entertainment but ſome of theſe

gentry find acceſs to, and they generally pay themſelves well for the trouble and expence they may be at in coming—The opera, two play-houſes, and capital auctions they are conſtant viſitors at, and almoſt every charity ſermon is ſure to be heard by them. I would not have my readers imagine that they go there out of a ſpirit of devotion; but with a view known beſt by their fingers: Harriſon and Romaine have been better friends to them than ever Garrick was—nothing gives greater ſatisfaction to a Knuckle, than to read in the public papers of any popular clergyman being to preach a charity ſermon the Sunday following; his company is ſure to be there, as many can teſtify afterwards to their diſagreeable ſurprize. As ſpring is now approaching, thoſe gentlemen who frequents races will act a prudent part to take the greateſt care of their pocket-books in particular, as many of theſe people frequents every race in England; there is not a grand ſtand, but one or more Knuckles are to be

be found at it. Pocket books are only ſafe in ſide-pockets, when the coat is buttoned, it being very eaſy to turn the flap of the coat back, and take the pocket book out; but in this particular I ſhall not pretend to adviſe, as the underſtanding of any gentleman is ſufficient to direct him what mode is ſafe to make uſe of to guard his property, when he knows that rogues are about him, which moſt aſſuredly is the caſe at every race.

As no one can be free or ſafe from theſe kind of locuſts, without knowing their method of proceeding, I ſhall be as explicit as poſſible. There is generally two goes together, one is the Knuckle, and the other the Gammon, (the perſon who Stalls for him) that is keeps before the perſon they mean to rob, to prevent their going on and receive the property the moment it is got.

When you happen to be in any crowd, you will act a prudent part to keep one hand upon your watch chain, and the other upon the pocket where your money

is, and if you find any one puſhing rather violently againſt you, it is almoſt certain he hath ſome bad deſign. Be ſure then to follow the advice here given, or if through forgetfulneſs you chance to loſe your property by not following theſe neceſſary precautions, take no notice till you ſee ſomebody get from you, and then lay hold of that perſon, whether man or woman, for ſome of the beſt Knuckles are women; but be very careful to ſecure their hands, as they will elſe convey it away to another that may be near them; many may think themſelves ſecure becauſe their breeches pockets are tight to their thighs; but they are very much miſtaken as a Knuckle, will work the lining of the pocket up by degrees, till he has got the money into his hands. The ladies are leſs ſecure than the men, for if they do not keep their hands to the very bottom of their pockets, they have a great chance of loſing the contents; for every Knuckle don't work only with his fingers, there are a few uſe entirely a knife; this me-

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thod requires the greateſt dexterity, as they are obliged to take the petticoat up to get to the bottom of the pocket, which when they have hold of, they get the contents to one corner, make an inciſion with the knife, and every article falls into his hand.

The JUMP.

NOTWITHSTANDING the repeated cautions given the public by the police in Bow-ſtreet, againſt this proceeding, it is yet very frequently done, and with great ſucceſs; obſtinacy ſeems to be the prevailing paſſion of the preſent generation, as they wilfully ſhut their eyes againſt the light of reaſon, by neglecting to follow advice which materially concerns their own intereſt.———The duſk of the evening is the time allotted for this, as it prevents any one at a diſtance from obſerving what paſſes; a great number of rogues then gets lurking about, taking advantage of the unpardonable neglect of others; every window they

they come near that has no light in, they open, if it happens not to be faſtened; they then take what is moſt valuable out of that room, and very often go into others in the ſame houſe, acting in the ſame manner by them, and when they have got as much as they think can be conveniently carried off, they let themſelves out at the ſtreet door, and go off uninterrupted with their booty, laughing at the weakneſs of thoſe they have robbed for not guarding againſt a proceeding which they have been ſo repeatedly cautioned againſt in the public papers—thoſe who reſide in bye private places, ſhould be as careful to have their windows faſtened in the day time, as in the evening, for they will occaſionally make attempts, though they have the day light againſt them, and by what I have heard always with ſucceſs: the gentleman's houſe, that was mentioned in the public papers to be robbed in the noon day, of a great quantity of plate, in or near Park-lane, was effected by this means; the window

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not being fecured, was very excuſeable in the ſervants, who not being ſufficiently acquainted with the proceedings of theſe villains, could not ſuppoſe that any would be daring enough to act in that manner, when having ſo many diſadvantages againſt them, as being heard or detected by ſome one of the family, and being ſeen by ſome paſſengers paſſing by: but this I hope will induce others to be more careful, as it muſt ſatisfy them that no time or place is ſufficient to deter villains hardened in their iniquity, from putting their deſigns in execution.

The SNEAK.

THOUGH this is an old proceeding, it is very little known by the public; I judge ſo from the great ſucceſs ſome hundreds has who goes upon it; for I apprehend that thoſe who are ſufferers, would not have been ſo unaccountably fooliſh, to expoſe themſelves to ſuch danger

danger had they known it, when a little trouble will always be a ſufficient guard againſt theſe kind of robbers.

There are two diſtinctions made between them, which are the morning and evening Sneaks; the terms are ſynonimous, as the proceedings are the ſame —the evening Sneak ſteals out when daylight begins to diſappear, and every ſhop he comes nigh that has no light in, nor nobody there, he goes in and takes what he can conveniently get at—the morning Sneak goes out early in the morning, and thoſe ſhops he ſees with no one in, he makes bold to take the advantage of, by carrying off the firſt things that comes to hand——both the morning and evening Sneaks, if they ſee the ſtreet door of any private houſe open, or upon the jar (occaſioned probably by the ſervants going upon errands) they go in and make a prey of whatever they can find that is worth carrying away.

All ſhop-keepers ſhould be very careful to have their doors locked or bolted when

when night begins to appear, for theſe people are ſo expeditious, that they require no more time than is neceſſary to take you from one room into another. There is another kind of Sneak that confines himſelf to no particular time; his chief buſineſs is to make himſelf acquainted with thoſe places where the moſt property is to be got; taverns and inns are their favourite places, many of which have greatly ſuffered, and the reſt may in time, if proper care is not taken; there is ſcarce a capital inn-keeper within an hundred miles of London, but they have ſome knowledge of the ſtate of his houſe, which information they receive from thoſe gentlemen that go upon the drop; they travel all over England, puts up at the beſt inns, and there they endeavour to learn every neceſſary particular; when they come to town, the firſt Sneak they meet with of their acquaintance, they give him this ſalutation, " I've ſeveral " rum kins for you to do upon the " Sneak;" they then go and drink to-

 gether,

gether, when the Drop Cull makes the Sneak acquainted with the whole: if the Sneak happens to have ſucceſs at either of theſe inns, he makes the other a preſent, ſometimes of one third what he gets.

Their method of proceeding is, for two men (ſometimes more) goes to an inn, and orders a dinner or a ſupper; at times they have notl.ing elſe but liquor, but that is immaterial, as they are informed before where the landlord's bed-room is, they have no difficulty to find it; one of them then goes down, ſettles the reckoning, and amuſes the landlord and landlady, by aſking them a number of queſtions, to prevent their going up ſtairs. When the other has done his buſineſs, he returns to the room he was in at firſt, rings the bell, and when the waiter comes up he deſires to know where that gentleman is who was with him, the waiter replies below, ſettling the reckoning; tell him then from me that I ſhall not ſtay any longer, as I have ſo far to go, (mentioning a dif-

different part of the country from where he is going to; the other then orders the horſes to be got ready, and they ſet off with all ſpeed for London, making themſelves merry at the expence of their unfortunate hoſt or hoſteſs.

As it is the opinion of every Sneak that the greateſt part of the money, bank notes, and other valuable articles an innkeeper has in his houſe is lodged in his bed-room, that is the firſt place they go to—therefore to deceive them in their expectations, it will be neceſſary for the future to change that place of depoſiting property, and put it in other places, where their underſtanding ſuggeſts to them is more ſafe—I would adviſe them to avoid putting any thing of value into bureaus, drawers, or any thing elſe where company is admitted, as a Sneak can, with the help of his Betty (an inſtrument turned up at one end like a hook) open almoſt any lock in England.

The DROP.

WAS the moſt intelligent amongſt the Drop Culls to endeavour to aſcertain the number that lives by this lay, he would find it impoſſible; I may venture to ſay there is at leaſt ten or twelve hundred in the different parts of this country; many of them have made very good fortunes, and only by following this. — Several authors, wiſe only in their own conceit, have given a very ſpurious account of the proceedings of theſe people, by which means the public have been both robbed and deceived, as they were as ignorant after reading thoſe accounts as they were before they began —It is however time to put a ſtop to theſe inequitable proceedings, as more families have been ruined and brought to the greateſt penury and diſtreſs by theſe meaſures, than by all the different ſpecies of robbing put together—There is not a fair in England but ſome of theſe villains are to

be

be found at it, and ſo ſucceſsful are they in their nefarious ſchemes, that five hundred pounds are as ſoon got by them, as a guinea is by any other method of defraud.

They go in parties of three in number, with leſs they cannot act, with ſafety and ſucceſs. Each has a different province aſſigned him, which he muſt be very careful not to deviate from, as the leaſt miſtake may ruin the whole.

The firſt is the Picker-up; his buſineſs is to go up to the countryman whom they mean to do, enter into converſation with him, and when he finds what part he has come from, and when he goes again, he expreſſes a great degree of ſatisfaction and ſurprize. I'm glad, ſays the Picker-up, I was ſo lucky as to meet with you, as it is in your power to prevent my going a great many miles, which I was very uneaſy about, having other buſineſs of conſequence to do in a different part—any thing I can be of ſervice to you in, ſays the countryman I will do—I return

you

you many thanks ſays the other; he then tells him a ſtory about ſome accident that happened to his horſe, which he was obliged to leave at ſuch an inn (mentioning ſome place near that where the countryman lives) and if you'll be ſo kind as to take a note there, you will be of great ſervice, and will oblige me much—That I will do anſwers the countryman—Well then, ſays the Picker-up, we will go to ſome houſe, where I will treat you with a bottle or a glaſs, and whilſt we are drinking that, I'll write the note—if the countryman (or to ſpeak in their language the Flat) aſſents to the propoſal, which is a hundred to one but he does, the Picker-up immediately takes him to a houſe he knows will anſwer his purpoſe ——When they have been there a little while, in comes the Kid and Cap, they aſk pardon for the intruſion, and pretend to go out again; if the Flat don't ſpeak the Picker-up ſays, we are not on any buſineſs of conſequence, you don't therefore diſturb us: oh no! ſays the Flat, I beg you'll come in gentlemen

tlemen; they then ſit down, when the Kid begins to imitate a fooliſh prodigal rich young fellow, who has ſo much money that he don't know what to do with it, and is therefore willing to loſe it at gaming—he then pretends to preſs the Cap to play again at the ſame game they did laſt night, and, ſays he, I'll loſe another hundred, or win the other back again; he then goes out as though to get ſome cards, and whilſt he is gone the Picker-up aſks the Cap who the Kid is; the Cap then tells him that he is a young country ſquire, that his father died but a little while ago, and left him ſeveral thouſand pounds, beſides a good landed eſtate, and that the laſt lottery he had a ten thouſand pound prize come up; but, continues the Cap, he'll ſoon deſtroy it all in gaming and whoring; he inſiſted upon my playing with him at cards laſt night, and he gave me ſuch odds that I won a hundred pounds of him, and the worſt of it is he can't play at all, and yet will have it he plays well.—What a pity it is, anſwers the

Flat,

Flat, he ſhould be ſo fooliſh.—Ah ſo it is, ſays the Cap.—When the Cap hath finiſhed his ſtory of him, the Kid comes in with a pack of cards in his hand; there now, ſays he, we'll play at the ſame game we did laſt night, and for five guineas if you like; no, that will be too much, replies the Cap, two guineas will be enough. Well then, for two Guineas, ſays the Kid, and he takes out of his pocket a parcel of looſe gold, lays it down upon the table, and ſays, there, I'll loſe that firſt before I break into this, producing a large purſe full of gold, but in general its only Quere, falſe counterfeit money.—They then get to cutting under ſuch a number, as five or ſix, for inſtance, which can very eaſily be done, as all above thoſe numbers are cut leſs than the other cards. Whilſt they are at play, the Picker-up ſays to the Flat, is it not a pity ſome honeſt induſtrious man had not this money, for it does this fool no good.—Ah, ſo it is, anſwers the Flat.—When the Kid has loſt about ten or twelve guineas, he refuſes to play any more

more with the Cap, he being ſo lucky.—But I'll play, ſays he, with either of theſe gentlemen.——Well, are you agreeable, ſays the Picker-up to the Flat, we may as well have ſome of his money as any body elſe. Suppoſe we lay him half a guinea a piece, you ſee we are ſure of winning. With all my heart, ſays the Flat: the money is put down, and the Flat is ſuffered to win two or three times together. The Kid then ſeems to be in a paſſion at being ſo unlucky, and, ſays he, I will either loſe all or win all at once. Here, I'll ſtake twenty guineas. If they know the Flat has much money, the Kid will put down fifty, and the Picker-up will prevail on the Flat to go halves in the ſtake, which he is very ready to do, thinking himſelf ſure of winning. The cards are then changed unknown to the Flat; the cards, under a certain number, being cut leſs than the others, that it is impoſſible for the Flat to cut under the number propoſed, tho' he has three times to do it in. When the Flat has loſt the

firſt ſtake, the Picker-up adviſes him to go his halves again in another of the ſame ſum. If the Flat happens not to have ſo much about him; he lays all he has, in hopes of recovering what he has loſt; but that goes in the ſame manner. The Picker-up then turns round to the Flat, and ſays, this is hard luck, but, however, I will try again, Fortune can't be always againſt me. You ſee the odds is very much in our favour. Ah, ſo it is, ſays the Flat, but I have no more money.—Nor can't you get no more? if he ſays yes, then one of them goes with him, and he loſes that in the ſame manner; but ſhould he ſay no, he can't get any more. The Picker-up then tells him, that they will at all events have another try; for, ſays he, I have a friend near here that I can borrow fifty or a hundred of. I will let you have half of that, and if we win, which is a hundred to nothing but we do. You then can give it me back again.—The Flat thinking what he ſays to be true, and ſtill being in hopes of recovering back what

he

he has loſt, thanks him for his kindneſs. The Picker-up then ſays to the Kid, I hope you'll ſtay till we come back, which will not be more than ten minutes. To be ſure, replies the Kid, I'll ſtay if its this two hours.—When the Picker-up, as taking the Flat about for near half an hour in ſearch of his friend, but to no purpoſe. He adviſes him to go back, and amuſe the Kid till he comes, leſt he ſhould go, and that you know would be very diſagreeable ſays he, after our loſing ſo much money; the Flat does as he is directed, but to his inexpreſſible ſorrow finds the pretended ſquire gone, with his friend the Cap—he waits ſome time in expectation of the Picker-up returning, and when he finds he is diſappointed in him, he then begins to imagine ſome roguery hath been played him, but its then too late to act the prudent part; his money is irrecoverably gone, and he goes away with the diſagreeable reflection that he hath been weak enough to ſuffer himſelf to be made a dupe of by

ſharpers.———I have been as particular as I could in deſcribing it, to prevent thoſe that read it from falling into their ſnares; the moſt ſenſible men have been deceived by them, for they manage their parts with ſuch nicety, that it muſt be a very diſcerning man who can ſee into their deſigns. If we will but for one moment conſider what prodigious ſums of money the public muſt be defrauded out of, to ſupport ſo great a number of vagrants; we muſt lament that the magiſtracy of this country have not thought proper to turn their attention more to the entirely deſtroying ſo great an evil; thoſe who commit offences which the laws puniſh with death, are ſearched after with unwearied diligence; the reward ſtimulates them in ſuch a purſuit.—But this offence, though attended with more loſs than all the capital crimes put together, is taken very little notice of; and as they know their actions are ſuffered to paſs with impunity; they not only act openly without reſtraint, but adviſe

others

others they are acquainted with, to follow the ſame proceedings. However incredible it may appear, it is ſtrictly true, that there is a Drop Cull who hath many apprentices he brings up to the ſame profeſſion. This laſt I have been treating of, is only one branch of the Drop, which they call the Lumber. There is another which they ſtile the Lope; the manner of proceeding is near the ſame; it differs only from the Lumber in the place of action, and the manner of getting the money.—At the Lope, the ſcene of performance is in a field, and inſtead of cards, which is uſed in the Lumber, they jump the Flat out of his property.—Their manner of inveighling him to the place that favour their deſigns, is, by telling him there is to be a fight. Which, if he likes to ſee, he moſt commonly accepts the offer of the Picker-up, to conduct him where it is to be ſeen.—When they get near the place, the Cap comes up and aſks ſeveral Queſtions about the fight. This ſatisfies the Flat there is

to be one. They then all three walk together, till they come to the field. The Kid then makes his appearance, and enters into converſation with them about the ſame affair; but acts his part in ſuch a manner as to make the Flat think he is quite a fool. He then tells them a ſtory about his jumping matches, what a deal of money he has loſt, and though he ſays he is very clever, yet he generally loſes; and for the ſoul of him he can't tell the reaſon. He then gives them a ſpecimen of his performance, which makes them all laugh. To make ſhort, the Flat is worked on by degrees to jump with him, and by the methods they uſe, he is ſoon jumped out of every ſhilling he hath. There is ſcarce a day but ſeveral of theſe jumping matches are going forward in the fields near London; particularly behind Montague-houſe, and the fields near Whitechapel.

Touching

Touching the RATTLER.

FROM the frequent cautions given by Sir John Fielding to the public againſt this proceeding, ſo many robberies of this kind are not committed as there uſed to be; but yet a month ſeldom paſſes, but you hear of a portmanteau being cut from behind a poſt chaiſe, and that from not following the directions given by that active and able magiſtrate.——This method of robbing is chiefly followed by thoſe who go upon the Drag Lay; and as it is their buſineſs to go a few miles out of town, if they ſee a portmanteau, either behind or before a chaiſe, that is unſecured for want of a chain, it is almoſt ſure to become their property.——The great number I ſee of portmanteaus that are faſtened only by a rope or a ſtrap, before a poſt chaiſe, gives me reaſon to conjecture that it is the general opinion portmanteaus or trunks are ſafe in that ſituation; but I muſt be free

enough

enough to ſay it is a very great miſtake, for they are as eaſily got before as behind, as one runs of each ſide the chaiſe, which he lays hold of with one hand, and with the other he cuts the ſtraps or ropes that ſecures it; they then follow the chaiſe behind for a little way, and the portmanteau drops of itſelf.

It is impoſſible for me to give a better caution than that Sir John hath given, which is to ſecure all portmanteaus with chains, but then I muſt add this, that the lock muſt be out of reach, as a Betty will open it with eaſe.

STARRING the GLAZE.

THIS mode of proceeding is now very much in faſhion among the thieves, and much money hath been got at it, and there is no doubt but a great deal more will be had, unleſs proper precautions are made uſe of to prevent it.—The method of acting is to cut a ſquare piece of glaſs out of a window or ſhop-board

board, big enough to take what is wanted out.——Silver-ſmiths in particular ſhould be very careful not to let their ſhop-boards be out after dark, unleſs ſecured by a wire over the top, cloſe enough to prevent any fingers from getting between; and if the ſame method was made uſe of to ſecure windows where valuable articles are put, it would be found very neceſſary.

It is almoſt uſeleſs to mention, that the inſtrument made uſe of in Starring the Glaze is a glazier's diamond.

The PINCH or TRUCK.

SIMPLE as this may appear, there is at leaſt fifty in London, who make as many pounds a day by it, upon a certainty, and live by nothing elſe; in the other parts of England there is a much greater number, they ſwarm about the Weſt.

Their method is, they go into a ſhop for ſome trifling errand, and aſks the

perſon who ſerves them if they have got a Queen Anne's ſhilling, which they will be very glad to give another for, as they want it for a particular uſe: as no one would be ill-natured enough to refuſe a cuſtomer ſuch a requeſt, they directly take what ſilver they have in their pockets, or in the till, and put it on the counter to look.—They immediately ſay, oh! I believe here is one, putting their fingers down to the ſilver, which, as ſoon as they touch, they clap a ſhilling up againſt the palm of their hand, and there it ſticks; they will ſerve two or three ſo with a great deal of eaſe; the palm of their hands are generally greaſed, but ſome are ſo dexterous by long practice, that they can do it with great ſafety without; if they happen to ſee any gold, they will do the ſame by that.——As many are at the different fairs in England, there is ſcarce a grazier or dealer in cattle to be found, but what hath loſt ſeveral guineas in this manner, and when he

miſſes them, he don't know how they were gone.

The beſt and ſureſt precaution I can think of, is, to let no one touch your money under any ſuch pretence, as you may depend their intentions are not very honeſt.

Flying the Basket.

AS there is not a ſtage coach or machine which comes to London, but hath been robbed in this manner; it is an unpardonable neglect to ſuffer any portmanteau, box, or any other parcel to be in the baſket behind, unleſs there is ſomebody in it, till it comes to the inn it is going to; London is more dangerous for this than the roads coming to it, as many are every evening waiting about at different parts of the town to avail themſelves of the opportunity of ſuch neglect, that a night does not paſs without ſomething being got; a minute is ſufficient to

do the buſineſs, it being cuſtomary now for thieves to have little boys, which they chuck into the baſket, who hands what they find there out to the others.——I think it would be impoſſible to walk two evenings a few times from St. Giles's to Snow-hill, and back again, but you would ſee ſeveral men, and little boys, if a machine happens to paſs by, running after it.——Near the Angel at Iſlington, and between the White Horſe Cellar, and Hyde Park turnpike, are places very much frequented by thieves, who have an opportunity there of ſeeing every waggon, poſt chaiſe and machine that paſſes.

The THRUST.

THIS is a ſpecies of defraud that hath been long in practice; many not only get a living by it, but is able to lay by a great deal of money. I ſpeak of thoſe who do not diſſipate what they get in drinking

drinking, gaming, and whoring. Three vices almoſt every thief is addicted to.

The Thruſt is a Silk Waiſtcoat, finely ornamented with braſs well gilt, to imitate gold. There are various patterns, ſome are decorated with half moons and ſtars, ſo thick, that it would be of great value, were they what they pretend them to be, pure ſolid gold.

Their buſineſs is to find out thoſe landlords and landladies of inns, public houſes, &c. that they think are weak, ſoft, fooliſh people, capable of being impoſed upon. As England abounds with ſuch kind of beings, they have always plenty of freſh game to ſtart. To come to the purpoſe, when they have got a ſufficient number, as they think will ſtand it, they go and drink at their houſes a few times, and perſuades them that as they are coming to live near there in a few days, they ſhall be exceeding good cuſtomers. When things are properly ripe, they come in a great hurry, take the landlord or landlady into a private room, ſhows them this waiſtcoat,

waiſtcoat, and tells them that being obliged to diſcharge a bill directly, or that they are going to purchaſe a quantity of things which they can get a great deal by; they have occaſion for a few pounds, which, if they will be kind enough to lend them eight or ten on that, they may depend upon having it again in a few days, when he ſhall come with ſome of his friends, and ſpend a guinea or two for their civility. If they happen to ſay, which ſometimes is the caſe, why this waiſtcoat to be ſure is very rich, but I'm not a judge of the va lue of it. Its worth at leaſt, replies the Sharp, is fifty guineas. I charge a great deal more to the perſon its made for. He then takes out the bill, which mentions, that the ſingle article of the gold comes to fifty-one pounds ſeven ſhillings, and ſix-pence; but, continues the Sharp, is there a taylor near, we'll ſend for him, and he will ſatisfy you what its worth; yes, ſays the landlord, there is one in the other room, meaning another Sharp, that is paſſed upon the landlord for a taylor.

He

He is ſent for in to give his opinion.—Ah, ah, ſays he, many ſuch a waiſtcoat have I made in my life-time. I'm ſure I can tell the value of it to within a guinea. He then pretends to reckon up with his fingers till he comes to fifty-five pounds, there he fixes it at.—The landlord finding the taylor's information to agree with that of the Sharp, makes no further heſitation; but lets him have the money, and willing further to oblige him, very often tells the Sharp that he may have four or five pounds more, in caſe he ſhould want it, which the Sharp never refuſes accepting of. Was a few advertiſements to be put in the public papers, deſiring all thoſe who have been impoſed upon in this manner, to ſend in their names to any certain place, I make no doubt but their would be at leaſt, in the courſe of ſix weeks, ſome thouſands. One man, whoſe name I can mention, gets off at leaſt eight or nine every month throughout the year.

To prevent any future defrauds of this kind, I muſt adviſe all landlords and land-

ladies,

ladies, and every one elſe, not to lend money on any ſuch thing, as the real intrinſic value is not more than ſeventeen ſhillings.

The LIFT or HOIST.

SHOPLIFTING, of all the other branches of thieving, is the moſt pernicious and deſtructive to tradeſmen; moſt ſhops, not only in London, but in every capital town in England, have been robbed at ſome time by theſe wretches; their genteel dreſs is a great protection, as it prevents thoſe they injure from ſuſpecting their intentions.—Thoſe who go upon this nefarious ſcheme, are looked upon as very indifferent hands, if they get ſo little as ten pounds a week; there are many who will get that of a day upon a certainty, if they are not detected, which ſeldom happens. As there are very near a hundred here in London, we may judge what infinite prejudice they do

do the trading part of the public, who are not ſenſible of the truth of this, from their being deprived of their property unknown to them. — Linnen-drapers, haberdaſhers, mercers, lace ſhops, ſilver-ſmiths, jewellers and hoſiers are the greateſt ſufferers; theſe are the kind of ſhops they like beſt, and from theſe they get the moſt property.

It is cuſtomary for a good Lift to get in the courſe of four or five hours, half a dozen cards of lace, two or three whole pieces of linnen, cambrick or muſlin, ten or twelve roles of ribbon, jewellery goods a great number, ſuch as rings of different kinds, buckles and trinkets.

I ſhall now deſcribe their method of acting, by which any tradeſman, when he is ſerving his cuſtomers, may know who is at work upon him; there is no kind of thieving ſooner detected, if attention is but given to the means I am now going to mention, they make uſe of. ——It is a general rule amongſt theſe kind of people, that leſs than two cannot

work with ſafety or ſucceſs, for which reaſon they go in parties of two each; if they mean to do a great deal of buſineſs they are obliged to have a third, which they ſtile their Bulk, as he receives the property they get out of every ſhop, to prevent any thing being found about them, ſhould they be detected.—When they go to a linnen draper's, mercer's or lace ſhop, they deſire to look at ſome linnen, ſilk, or lace; a quantity is immediately put upon the counter; if they think there is not enough, they deſire to look at ſome more, till there is ſufficient to anſwer their purpoſe; during this ceremony they make ſeveral feints with their hands down towards the bottom of their ſtays; if they ſee this does not cauſe any ſuſpicion, they then begin to work; one of them, which they call the Gammon, takes off the attention of the ſhop-keeper from the other, by aſking the quality and the value of ſeveral articles, which, whilſt he is ſatisfying her in, the other in a moment takes the things ſhe wants, and puts them

them under her petticoat, where there is ſharp pointed hooks ready to receive them, if it happens to be any thing bulky; lace is put under her ſtays. They then purchaſe ſome trifling article, and go away.

As it is impoſſible for men to get ſuch bulky things as pieces of cloth, &c. their province lies amongſt lace ſhops, jewellers, and haberdaſhers; as they have not the ſame advantages as a woman, they are obliged to be more quick and dextrous. When it is their intention to get any lace, ribbon, or any other ſuch kind of articles, they make ſeveral feints with their hands towards their ſide-pockets; if they find you take no particular notice of that manœuvre, they then proceed to action. Your attention is drawn to one of them, whilſt the other deprives you of your property, by throwing the things he gets into his ſide-pocket, which is done ſo quick, that it is imperceptable to the niceſt eye, when fixed upon another perſon.

With reſpect to jewellery, either one or two can work at it. I mean thoſe articles that are ſmall, as they will, unperceived, get any thing which is not to large, up againſt the palm of their hands, in the ſame manner I before mentioned in the Truck, and as their hands are open, it is ſeldom, if ever, ſuſpected.

As to guard againſt theſe kind of proceedings, are of the greateſt conſequence to every tradeſman; it is neceſſary in theſe degenerate times not to have ſo good an opinion of every ſtranger, as to be unguarded againſt his actions; an experience of the world muſt ſatisfy the moſt unthinking, that the principles of every one is not guided by a line of honeſty. This conſideration ought to induce mankind in general, and the trading part in particular to treat as circumſpectly as poſſible, they would not then be ſo liable to meet with the many misfortunes that is almoſt ſure to attend the credulous and unwary. But to return to my ſubject, when-ever any ſuch behaviour is practiſed, as I have been

been mentioning, the perſon in whoſe ſhop its in, will do right to be as watchful as he can; but I would adviſe every tradeſman as the moſt ſalutary and effectual way, to have another in the ſhop with him, and if there happens to be more cuſtomers than they can both ſerve at one time; for one to leave off, and look on whilſt the other ſerves. However inconvenient or diſagreeable this may appear to any one, it is abſolutely incumbent on him for his own ſafety and advantage to do it. London ſwarms with ſhop-lifters, and as they are every day putting in execution their villainous meaſures, no tradeſman is ſecure a moment from them.

13 JU 64

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GENERAL CAUTION.

IN theſe times of danger, when honeſty ſeems to be treated as a principle merely chimerical, how neceſſary and incumbent it is on every one who means to be guided by honour and virtue, and wiſhes to obtain a comfortable proviſion for themſelves and their innocent offſpring, to make circumſpection their inviolable rule in the conducting their affairs; it is that eaſineſs of temper, and too great credulity which reigns predominant in the preſent ſyſtem of buſineſs, that brings ſo many honeſt induſtrious families to the greateſt miſery and indigence. This is the grand ſpring which occaſions ſuch frequent bankruptcies, to the great diſhonour and ruin of the commercial world. England abounds with villains of all ranks and ſtations. Poverty and a bad education is the principal cauſe which

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makes ſo many rogues among the lower claſs of people; whilſt a life of diſſipation naturally, and with haſty ſtrides, bring thoſe, who are of a higher degree in life, into the commiſſion of the ſame proceedings to ſupport their voluptuous manner of living. It is not the laws that conſtitutes the crime, but the nature of the thing itſelf; and a Swindler, whoſe intention it is from the firſt to defraud a tradeſman of his property, is deſerving of the ſame puniſhment that is inflicted on the Shop-lifter.—As many people in a genteel life are become as habituated to ſwindling, as others in a low life are to thieving, how much it behoves every one to guard againſt the meaſures of both; that when a tradeſman is endeavouring to ſecure himſelf againſt the deſigns of a thief, he ſhould not forget that as much caution is required to render ineffectual the intentions of a Swindler.

F I N I S.

13 JU 64